

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8753

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAN JOSE 4614

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR CS

SUBJECT: SENATOR JACKSON'S LETTER TO DEPUTY
ECHEVERRIA AND CIA ALLEGATIONS

1. LA HORA FOR DECEMBER 5 CARRIES A REPORT THAT SEVERAL UNIDENTIFIED ASSEMBLY DEPUTIES ARE CONTEMPLATING CALLING FOR AN INVESTIGATION OF ALLEGED TIES BETWEEN SENATOR JACKSON AND THE CIA. THIS IS REPORTEDLY PROMPTED BY THE SENATOR'S RECENT LETTER TO DEPUTY JUAN JOSE ECHEVERRIA (PRD) "WHICH HAS SERVED AS A BASIS FOR REQUESTING THE ASSEMBLY TO EXPEL" ROBERT VESCO FROM COSTA RICA.

2. THE PRESS REPORT FAILS TO NOTE THAT THE SENATOR WAS REPLYING TO A SPECIFIC REQUEST FROM ECHEVERRIA. IN FACT, IT GOES ON TO SAY THAT IT IS OF CONCERN IN THE ASSEMBLY THAT THE U.S. SENATOR SHOWS SUCH INTEREST IN VESCO THAT HE HAS "PUT HIMSELF IN CONTACT WITH COSTA RICAN DEPUTIES TO SEEK SOME ARRANGEMENT WHICH PERMITS HIS (VESCO'S) EXPULSION FROM THE COUNTRY." NOTHING THAT THE SENATOR WAS CHARGED BY THE SENATE WITH AN INVESTIGATION OF VESCO, THE UNNAMED DEPUTIES REPORTEDLY BELIEVE THAT JACKSON HAS GONE BEYOND THE NORAML REQUIREMENT "AS IF HIS LIFE DEPENDED ON ACHIEVING THE EXTRADITION" OF VESCO.

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3. THE SAME LA HORA PIECE QUOTES PASO COMMUNIST DEPUTY ARNOLDO FERRETO SEQURA AS SUPPORTING AS ASSEMBLY INVESTIGATION OF VESCO, THE CIA AND OTHER EVILS ALL IN ONE PACKAGE. FERRETO REPORTEDLY BLAMED THE GOCR FOR FAILURES TO CRACK DOWN ON THE CIA. IT IS A MATTER OF PUBLIC KNOWLEDGE," HE SAID, "THAT PETER JOHNSON, A SENIOR OFFICER OF THE AMERICAN EMBASSY, IS THE CHIEF OF THE GROUP OF CIA AGENTS WHICH OPERATES IN THIS COUNTRY."

4. IN A SEPARATE SHORT LA HORA ARTICLE MINISTER OF PUBLIC SECURITY MARIO CHARPENTIER WAS QUOTED AS SAYING THAT HE WOULD "ORDER AN INVESTIGATION, WITH GREAT PLEASURE, OF THE 75 CIA AGENTS IN THE COUNTRY. I ONLY HOPE THAT THE HONORABLE DEPUTIES CAN PROVIDE MORE DETAILS IN ORDER THAT THE MINISTRY CAN ORDER IT. I BELIEVE THAT THE MOMENT IS PREMATURE TO REFER TO AN UNSUBSTANTIATED ACCUSATION.

5. COMMENT: AT THIS STAGE, THE INSINUATIONS ABOUT SENATOR JACKSON DO NOT IN THE EMBASSY'S JUDGMENT WARRANT A PUBLIC STATEMENT AS THEY ARE LIKELY TO APPEAR ONLY IN THE LOW CIRCULATION AND WIDELY DIS-CREDITED LA HORA. IN ANY CASE, IT IS LIKELY THAT IF STORY GAINS CURRENCY ECHEVERRIA HIMSELF WILL SET THE RECORD STRAIGHT ON WHO INITIATED THE CORRESPONDENCE. LA HORA, HOWEVER, MAY BE COUNTED ON TO TRY TO KEEP THE POT BOILING FOR VESCO AND TO EMBROIL THE USG AND SPECIFICALLY THE EMBASSY IN ANY WAY IT CAN. IN THE MEANTIME, WE KNOW LA NACION HAS A COPY OF THE JACKSON LETTER TO ECHEVERRIA AND IS PREPARING IT FOR PUBLICATION.
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